

# Know Your Enemy

Spiritual Warfare ~ February 7, 2021 ~ Rev 12.1-17

## “Know Your Enemy”

- ❖ “If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know the enemy and you know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles.” – This is an excerpt from “*The Art of War*” by Sun-tzu
  - ❖ He was a Chinese military general, strategist and philosopher (5<sup>th</sup> century)
  - ❖ Bought & sold copy of Chairman Mao’s “**Little Red Book**” last fall

## Forty Years a Christian

- ❖ III: 40 years ~ “In April I will have been a Christian for 40 years.”
  - ❖ Ben Franklin said “Life's tragedy is that we get old too soon and wise too late.”
- ❖ For too long I didn’t take spiritual battle seriously
  - ❖ It’s very easy to do so – job, wife, children, pleasures
  - ❖ It’s easy to forget that as a Christian, you’re on a mission, you’re in a war
  - ❖ There are books to read, games to play, movies to watch, vacations to plan, adventures to partake in (in summary, so very many distractions)
- ❖ War can be exhausting & all consuming, yet so easily avoided
  - ❖ We opt out of one battle (*worship service, prayer meeting, devotion, fast*)
  - ❖ Soon we’re opting out of the war– life away from the front lines is peaceful
- ❖ Avoiding the war entirely has serious consequences (*personally & societally*)
  - ❖ Such consequences, however, often aren’t immediately obvious
    - But I won’t delve deeper into that topic right now
    - Because the war (our embracing battle) is the last topic in our series
- ❖ Today’s topic is “**Know Your Enemy**”
  - ❖ Next: “**Master Your Weaponry**”, “**Engage Your Allies**”, & “**Embrace Your Battle**”

**Xition: So let’s learn about our enemy . . .**

## Satan and His Angels Never Sleep

- ❖ It's sobering to realize that while we're lounging in the rear – far from front lines
  - ✧ Satan and his demonic forces are at work – they never rest – they never vacation
- ❖ **III: Terminator** (1984) ~ Kyle Reese trying to convince Sarah Connors of danger
  - ✧ “Listen and understand. That terminator is out there. It can't be bargained with. It can't be reasoned with. It doesn't feel pity, or remorse, or fear. And it absolutely won't stop, ever, until you are dead.”
  - ✧ We must take Satan, and the war we're in, seriously, as seriously as he does
- ❖ “**Know Your Enemy**” could really be “**Know Your Enemies**” – (4 of them)
  - ✧ **World / Flesh** (“old man”) / **devil** (Satan) / and his minions (**demons**)
  - ✧ Let's begin by exploring our text – **Rev 12**

## Revelation 12 – “**the heart of the heart of the book of Revelation**” (P Kayser)

- ❖ Phil preached 7 sermons on **ch12** in 2017 – So we'll need only a few minutes
  - ✧ All history from Creation to Fall of Jerusalem summed up in 17 verses
- ❖ 5 Characters – **v1** woman, **v2** child, **v3** dragon, **v4** stars of heaven, **v17** offspring
  - ✧ woman – **Zion** – patriarchs, Israel, Moses, Judaism -> (Church)
  - ✧ Child – **Jesus** – Messiah
  - ✧ dragon – **Satan** – given in the text
  - ✧ stars – **demons** – (*Satan's angels – 1/3 of all*)
  - ✧ offspring – **Christians** all over the world

## 1<sup>st</sup> Enemy – “**Satan**” - What Satan Is - ( is / was / declared / became )

- ❖ He and all angels are spirits (*immaterial and immortal*) -> (*like God*)
- ❖ Satan is a person (*as is God, as are we, and as are all angels*)
- ❖ Satan is a creature (*like man*) – He was created by Jesus as were all things
  - ✧ He and all of the “**sons of God**” sang when the earth was created (**Job 38.7**)
- ❖ Satan had not yet fallen when God pronounced creation “**very good**” in **Gen 1.31**

## Xition: These are what Satan is – but what was he when created?

## What Satan Was

- ❖ Satan was called “the anointed cherub who covers” in **Eze 28.12b-15** (Read)
  - ✧ Two cherubs were mounted on the lid of the ark of the covenant
  - ✧ Two cherub statues filled the Holy of Holies (*their wings touching*)
  - ✧ Several times **OT** refers to God as One Who “dwells between the cherubim”
- ❖ Satan was “the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty”
  - ✧ Satan had a role “in Eden, the garden of God”

## What Satan Declared in Rebellion Against God

- ❖ **Read Isaiah 14.12-15** ~ Lucifer cut down to the ground
  - ✧ **Is 14** ~ “Lucifer” ~ “Day Star” or Venus / “son of the morning”
    1. “I will ascend into heaven” ~ “that’s my rightful place” (not Eden)
    2. “I will exalt my throne above the stars of God” ~ rule over all angels
    3. “I will also sit on the mount of the congregation” ~ rule over all men
    4. “I will ascend above the heights of the clouds” ~ share in God’s glory
    5. “I will be like the Most High” ~ he tempted Eve with what he was tempted with
- ❖ Satan displaced man as regent of earth / not content to serve / wanted to rule

## What Satan Became – Titles and Character Traits

1. “prince of this world” ~ ruler of the cosmos – over fallen angels and men
2. “prince of the power of the air” ~ emperor of atmosphere (all beings of earth)
3. “god of this world” ~ he fuels the spirit of this present evil age
4. “spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience” ~ ruler of worldly influence
5. “ruler of demons” ~ Beelzebul -> “lord of the flies”
6. “Satan” ~ “adversary” – used 52 times
7. “devil” ~ “diabolos” / slanderer – used 35 times
8. “accuser” ~ We read this in **Rev 12** – accuser of brethren thrown down
9. “tempter” ~ Jesus called him this after the time in wilderness
10. “liar, deceiver” ~ Jesus called him liar from beginning, one who deceives the world
11. “serpent of old” ~ emphasizing the deception of Eve and Adam

12. “great dragon” ~ beautiful – but terrifying & destructive beast
13. “destroyer” ~ locust-like demon Abaddon or Apollyon
14. “evil one” ~ intrinsically wicked, seeks to corrupt others

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Enemy – “Demons” (Satan’s Angels)

- ❖ 5 different words often translated as “demon” in English
  - ❖ Read Deu 31.17 ~ “rulers, lords” ~ Israelites worshipping idols (demons)
  - ❖ Read Lev 17.7 ~ “hegoats” ~ sacrificed to them in desert places (demons)
  - ❖ Read Ps 96.5 ~ “emptiness, nothingness” ~ but demons behind them real
  - ❖ Read Is 65.11 ~ “Fortune, Destiny” ~ also worship of Baal
  - ❖ Read 91.6 ~ “destruction” ~ regarded as an evil spirit

## Not All Demons are Free

- ❖ Pastor Kayser taught from **Rev 20** that Satan is now bound – bound in 70AD
- ❖ Some demons are free and others are imprisoned
  - ❖ Free - Jesus released Legion to enter the swine (**Mt 8, Mk 5, Lk 8**)
    - They asked, “Have you come here to torment us before the time?”
    - Jesus didn’t require that they leave the country or enter the abyss
  - ❖ Bound – abyss -or- **Read 2 Pet 4** ~ “God did not ..” – imprisoned to the end

## Character of Demons

- ❖ They are morally and spiritually unclean (*intellect and will are twisted*)
  - ❖ The demon possessed were often nude, dwelling in burial places
- ❖ They vary in wickedness (“more wicked than himself” **Mt 12:45**)
  - ❖ They’re described as sensual, greedy, corrupt, deceitful, adulterous
- ❖ They oppose God and His people
  - ❖ They’re intelligent and knowledgeable – insight into spiritual truths
  - ❖ Some have knowledge of future – fortune telling
- ❖ They perform miracles, implant thoughts, cause men to suffer pain and death

## Organization and Unity of Spiritual Evil

- ❖ Read Eph 6.12 ~ “we do not wrestle .. heavenly places”
  - ✧ Demons are well organized and well disciplined
- ❖ I see no direct biblical evidence of disunity amongst demons (*Lewis & Peretti*)
  - ✧ Yet their corruption (*noetic effects*) forces us to infer this
  - ✧ Perhaps they vicariously experience this through humans as proxies
- ❖ Their unity is formidable because they’re united to fight God

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Enemy – “World”

- ❖ Read Eph 2.1-3 ~ “course of this world” (age)
  - ✧ Christ received rulership over all of the earth at His ascension
- ❖ Yet the world described by Paul still exists – it still prevails on earth
  - ✧ Jesus is patiently allowing His Church to slowly take it over
    - The Church advances in a culture, but then regresses
- ❖ Paul describes our warfare in **2 Corinthians 10.3-5 (Read)**
  - ✧ This may be the text chosen for the last sermon – undecided

## 4<sup>th</sup> Enemy – “Flesh”

- ❖ Read Romans 7.18-25 ~ “.. I know that in me .. Christ our Lord!”
  - ✧ v18 ~ “how to perform what is good I do not find” (*in my flesh*)
  - ✧ A traitor lives within us – The “old man” resists sanctification
- ❖ “‘God is love,’ **1 John 4.8**, He is so in himself, eternally excellent, and desirable above all. He is so to us, he is so in the blood of his Son and in all the inexpressible fruits of it, by which we are what we are, and wherein all our future hopes and expectations are wrapped up. Against this God we carry about us an enmity all our days; an enmity that has this from its nature, that it is incapable of cure or reconciliation. Destroyed it may be, it shall be, but cured it cannot be.” - “*Indwelling Sin in the Believer*” by John Owen

**Xition: I'll close this message with 2 thoughts . . .**

## 1<sup>st</sup> – Invisibility of Spiritual Realm

- ❖ An advanced culture such as ours is prone to materialism
  - ✧ Wealthy nations tend to suffer this as a side-effect of progress
  - ✧ This naturally diminishes our thoughts of the invisible or supernatural
- ❖ “Most Americans, even those who say they are Christian, have doubts about the intrusion of the supernatural into the natural world. Hollywood has made evil accessible and tame, making Satan and demons less worrisome than the Bible suggests they really are. It’s hard for achievement-driven, self-reliant, independent people to believe that their lives can be impacted by unseen forces.” - Barna survey 4/ 2009

## 2<sup>nd</sup> – Ambivalent Towards Spiritual Enemies

- ❖ Immersion in the material world dulls our spiritual senses
  - ✧ We don’t regard demons as primarily our concern
  - ✧ We expect angels and God to take the initiative against them
    - After all, they’re spiritual beings just like the demons
- ❖ “Even if there are demons all around me, what can I do about them?”
  - ✧ We’ll take on temptations we face and evil we see in visible world
  - ✧ But we’ll leave fighting of demons to spiritual professionals
- ❖ This is an abandonment of our duty – we’ll cover more later

- Let’s commit to renewed vigor in the battle against our spiritual enemies
- Let’s remember that “He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world”

### ➤ Prayer and Song

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,  
And to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,  
To God our Savior, who alone is wise,  
Be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever.

Amen **\*pause\*** Go in peace . . .

# Know Your Enemy - Handout

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1. Name some spiritual battles we may abandon: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What are the sermon titles in this spiritual warfare series? 1) \_\_\_\_\_ your \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_ your \_\_\_\_\_, 3) \_\_\_\_\_ your \_\_\_\_\_, and 4) \_\_\_\_\_ your \_\_\_\_\_.
3. List the 4 tireless enemies of Christians. 1) \_\_\_\_\_, 2) \_\_\_\_\_, 3) \_\_\_\_\_, and 4) \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Pastor Kayser referred to Revelation 12 as “The \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ of the book of Revelation.”
5. Satan is a \_\_\_\_\_ like God, and a \_\_\_\_\_ like man.
6. Where was Satan stationed as a cherub of God: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Write down a few of Satan’s titles or character traits that were mentioned:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
8. Write down aspects of demons: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
9. An advanced culture such as ours is prone to what? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Immersion in the material world does what to our spiritual senses? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

